

## Hydrology Indicators

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The presence of water (hydrology) at or near the surface for a designated amount of time, is an indicator of a wetland. Water in Washington's wetlands come from several sources: precipitation in the form of rain or snow, tidal action, flood events, and ground water. Most hydrologic indicators can be observed during a typical field inspection. Although most indicators do not reveal the frequency, timing, or duration of flooding or soil saturation, some indicators do provide evidence of the periodic presence of flooding or soil saturation:

- Standing or flowing water is observed on the area during the growing season.
- Soil is waterlogged during the growing season.
- Water marks are present on trees or other upright objects. Such marks indicate that water periodically covers the area to the depth shown on the objects.
- Drift lines, which are small piles of debris oriented in the direction of water movement through an area, are present. These often occur along contours and represent the approximate extent of flooding in an area.
- Debris is lodged in trees or piled against other object by water.
- Orange to rust colored concentrations in the soil or in any roots channels in the soil.
- Thin layers of sediment deposited on leaves or objects. Sometimes these become consolidated with small plant parts to form discernible crust on the soil surface.
- Certain plant types and soils occurring in the area.

Evidence of wetland hydrology may also be provided by gaging station or groundwater well data, but such information is limited for most areas and, when available, requires analysis by a trained individual.

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